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Canada

Eliminating Workplace Discrimination, Harassment and Child Labour in the Lao People's Democratic to Support Trade and Compliance

September/2025

Awareness raising campaign on elimination of child labour in banana plantations- Oudomxay province. © Bounthavy Bounmy/ILO.

At a glance



Partners

- ▶ Government: Ministry of Labour of Labour and Social (MOLSW), relevant line government agencies including National Assembly, Ministry of Education and Sport, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Finance.
- ▶ Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI)
- ▶ Lao Federation of Trade unions
- ▶ Other stakeholders: Lao Women Union, Lao Youth Unions, TVETs and CSO.



Donor

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), the Government of Canada.



Duration

February 2025 – February 2028



Target beneficiaries

Women, youth, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, and vulnerable groups including ethnic groups and children.



Budget

CAD\$ 1 million (approx. US\$ 707,714)

Project overview

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) has made significant economic progress in recent years, with an average annual growth rate of around 6 per cent. The country is scheduled to graduate from the least developed country (LDC) to a developing country in 2026; it will need to maintain its competitiveness after this point as it will not have its protective safeguards under the LDC status. Lao PDR will have to prepare for entering trade negotiations and opening its economy as per WTO rules. Compliance with fundamental principles and rights at work (FPRW) are key components of many trade agreements, for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), and for accessing preferential opportunities into larger markets.

The project *Elimination of Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, and Child Labour in the Lao People's Democratic Republic to Support Trade and Compliance*, funded by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) of the Government of Canada, aims to align national labour practices with international labour standards, which is crucial in the context of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and evolving expectations within global supply chains.

To address these issues, the project focuses on key trade sectors by strengthening social dialogue and building the capacity of tripartite constituents to prevent discrimination and harassment at work both in law and in practice and to combat child labour. Additionally, the project seeks to promote social dialogue and supportive labour relations policies that uphold respect for the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW).

► Project approaches

- **Tripartite and key stakeholder engagement:** to finalize and implement the National Plan of Action on the Elimination of Child Labour, and to develop a National Roadmap outlining the implementation of the CAS recommendations, including draft amendments to the labour law in line with ILO Convention No. 111.
- **Capacity building and institutional strengthening:** to enhance the capacity of tripartite constituents, relevant government agencies, and social partners to effectively promote and enforce FPRW in line with international labour standards; to improve enterprise-level workplace consultation and cooperation mechanisms; and to deliver trainings to employers and workers.
- **Development of tools and public awareness:** to develop training modules and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials for the elimination of workplace discrimination and awareness-raising campaigns on the elimination of child labour.
- **Development of monitoring mechanisms on trade sectors:** to conduct a gender and inclusion analysis; to regularly monitor and update the inventory of child labour; and to strengthen enforcement of child labour elimination by identifying existing challenges and providing recommendations to address them.

► Project expected outcomes

- **A National Roadmap is developed** outlining the implementation of the CAS recommendations related to Convention No. 111, including a comprehensive plan to draft amendments to labour legislation.

- **The capacity of relevant state actors and social partners is strengthened** to promote non-discrimination at work and protection against harassment.
- **A draft National Plan of Action on Child Labour is finalized** through consultations with social partners and other relevant stakeholders at national and provincial levels.
- **A gender-responsive awareness-raising campaign against child labour is conducted** at sectoral levels and rolled out nationally and provincially, with IEC and advocacy materials developed to support the National Tripartite Consultative Committee.
- **A national child labour monitoring system is developed**, focusing on trade sectors, and regularly updated through consultations with relevant government agencies and stakeholders.
- **Enforcement mechanisms are strengthened** to ensure no child labour in trade sectors through the development of industry/trade sector-specific guidelines and capacity building of relevant institutions for coordinated enforcement procedures.



Washing bananas in banana plantations-Oudomxay province.
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